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TAGS: [KNNP](#) [MNUC](#) [PARM](#) [IAEA](#) [PREL](#) [AORC](#)

SUBJECT: SLOVENIA AGREES ON IRAN, BUT SEES NARROW WINDOW OF OPPORTUNITY

REF: STATE 95073

Classified By: POL/ECON:TEVANS, REASONS: 1.4 (B) AND (D)

¶1. (C) On September 18, Pol/Econ Chief called on MFA's Tomaz Mencin, Head of Division for Africa, the Middle East, Asia and Oceania, and Tadej Rupel, Head of the Unit for Middle East to urge Slovenia's active involvement in calling on Iran to engage constructively with the P5 1. Mencin affirmed that Slovenia was in agreement with the US position, adding "we have no real differences between us on this." When asked if Slovenian President Tuerk would be willing to address the issue in his public statement at the UNGA, Mencin could not confirm, but said any public comments would reflect the common EU position. Mencin agreed that we have a window of opportunity to get through to Iran on this issue, but that it would probably close by the end of the year. In light of this time frame, he wondered if the threat of new sanctions would be plausible, given the amount of time needed to get them through the UN process.

¶2. (C) Mencin said he was not surprised at all that the Iranian September 9 proposal was "deliberately loose," designed to turn attention to matters other than the key issue. He recalled a meeting in early 2008 at which then Foreign Minister Rupel, representing the EU Presidency, was "very tough" with Iran's Foreign Minister, saying "listen my friend, tell me how you are going to deal with this problem." The response, he said, was cordial and covered a lot of ground, but was evasive and vague on the point at hand. "The Iranians carefully analyze every aspect of this issue," he said, so they are able to adapt and respond to every argument "but still get their way."

¶3. (C) Mencin said he was pleased to see that the U.S. message to Iran included points on human rights. He believes the EU is becoming more convinced that pursuing the nuclear issue alone is not working, and that future approaches to Iran have to be more comprehensive, linking in related issues, especially human rights. This has been heightened in the aftermath of the Iranian elections. With the detentions of EU diplomats, he said, the mood in the EU and in the GoS had changed perceptively. "Some of our people have been affected directly, and this brings us into direct confrontation with the Iranian government, which has not happened before."

¶4. (C) He also noted that the trade aspect is especially important for Slovenia, which has a robust (in relative terms) trading relationship with Iran. Slovenia isn't Iran's largest trading partner in the EU, he said, but is somewhere in the middle, above Portugal, Greece and Ireland. He said Slovenia imports very little from Iran but has a high volume of non dual-use exports such as pharmaceuticals, high-end paper products, specialized metal products, industrial compressors and sensors, etc. But he added that even if the

EU were willing and able to cut off all trade with Iran, it probably would not hurt Iran that much. Iran always seems to find ways around sanctions, he said, especially if other members of the P5 +1 appeared to be wavering, like Russia and China. For this reason, he thought any future measures had to be specifically targeted, since leading sectors in Iran, such as the Revolutionary Guard, are extremely skilled in finding ways around sanctions.

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